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COUNTRY Hungary

SUBJECT Imre Kovacs' Resignation from
the National Peasant Party

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ORIGIN

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DIST. 31 March 1947

PAGES

SUPPLEMENT

1. The long-standing crisis within the Hungarian National Peasant Party came to a head with the announcement of the resignation from the party of Imre Kovács on 26 February. The issue at stake was extremist cooperation with the workers' parties against what many considered the national interest. Kovács was the founder of the National Peasant Party in 1939, its leader during the war-time resistance days and most recently, its vice-chairman.
2. Kovács' resignation is a personal victory for Péter Veres, chairman of the National Peasant Party, who is at present directing the party's definitely pro-Soviet policy. Veres, who is tainted with Nazi collaboration, is now popularly regarded as a "nationalist bolshevik". He forced Kovács' resignation at a moment when the latter's personal position was compromised as a result of his wife's arrest by American authorities in Vienna for black market operations. As a consequence of this embarrassment, plus the delicate political situation current in Hungary, Kovács is prevented from effecting a schism in the National Peasant Party. Ordinarily he could easily bring about such a split, since he has the support of a majority of National Peasant Party members in Parliament as well as the backing of the provincial party organizations. Veres controls the Party's Central Committee.
3. The completeness of Veres' victory is evident in the reorganization of the party's leadership following Kovács' resignation. The subsequently elected seven man Political Executive Committee consists entirely of extreme left-wing members:
 - Péter Veres, President
 - Ferenc Erdei, General Secretary
 - Ferenc Gem, Deputy General Secretary
 - László Némási, Deputy General Secretary
 - József Darvas
 - Ferenc Farkas
 - Pál Szabo
4. Kovács is expected to be taken into the Small Holders Party where he will be given an important position. He will probably take with him a large number of dissatisfied National Peasant Party members.

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comment: Veres has since become the Minister of Reconstruction in the Hungarian cabinet. He was born a peasant and has been imprisoned during the Horthy regime. He is 50 years old.)

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